COMMANDER'S DIGEST
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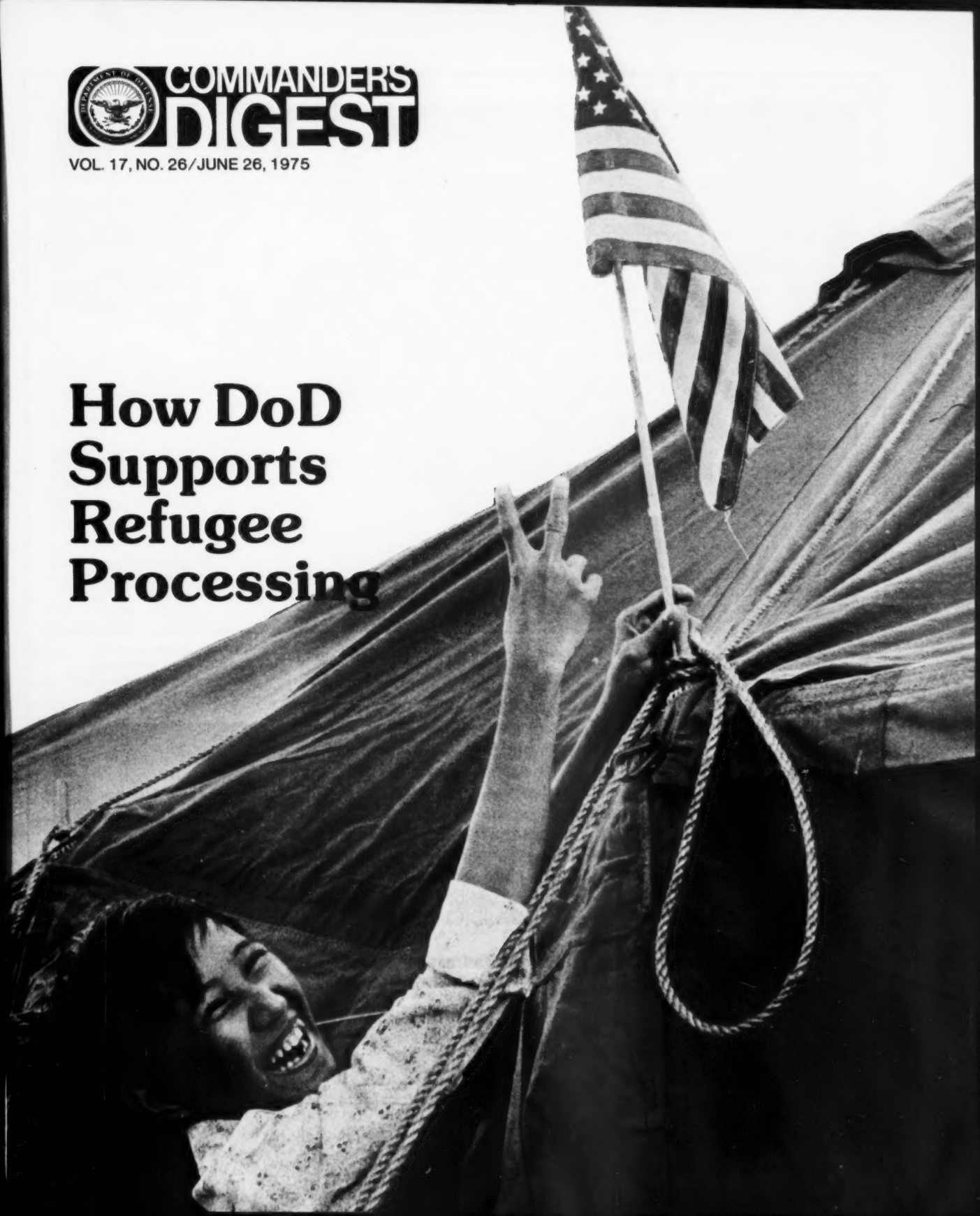
How DoD Supports Refugee Processing



Nguyen Thanh Vong is reunited with American friends who will escort her to a California sponsor.

Thousands of Vietnamese military refugees are now in refugee resettlement centers in the United States and in transit/process toward the United States from overseas. Many contacts have been made through the Inter-Agency Task Force by individual military personnel to sponsor these individuals and families. In fact, the response of the military community as a whole to the needs of these long time friends has been most heartening.

Without imposing any requirements on the voluntary nature of this program, it would be helpful for the Military Departments to stimulate and encourage, on a coordinated basis, sponsorship on the part of individuals, social groups such as wives clubs, and commands.

Request any efforts that may be undertaken be coordinated with the office of Mr. Erich F. von Marbod, ODASD(C), Director, DoD Task Force on Vietnamese refugees.

Your early support of this assistance for Vietnamese friends is requested.

DoD Task Force director, Erich F. von Marbod. Mr. von Marbod serves as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller).

Office, Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C.

Efficiency Keynotes Refugee Resettlement

The United States Government (USG) is processing Indochinese refugees quickly through four reception areas in the continental United States (CONUS), while still insuring that the refugees are properly resettled and that the possibility of their becoming public charges is reduced.

The Government's goal is to make Indochinese refugees self-supporting members of their American communities in the shortest possible time.

GENERAL

The USG guidelines and procedures below are being followed at each processing center; however, senior civil coordinators may modify these procedures to fit particular needs. They normally notify the Inter-Agency Task Force, Washington, D.C., of major changes.

Refugee processing is being accomplished expeditiously, and arriving refugees are processed as soon as practicable.

The elements of refugee processing are:

- Camp reception;
- Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in-processing;
- Social Security number issuance;
- Department of Health, Education, and Welfare counselling on health and social services;
- Sponsorship verfication;
- INS final processing (security check verification); and
- Final processing out and travel.

SECURITY CLEARANCES

Results of security checks are required before release from refugee camps for all refugees 17 years or older with two exceptions:

- Relatives of either American citizens or permanent resident aliens; and
- Former USG employees having had valid security clearances.

Security checks on persons in these categories are being performed after they have arrived at their final destination in the American community.

SPONSORSHIP

With certain exceptions, refugees require sponsors to assist in insuring that they do not become public charges and to help each refugee make the transition from refugee status to a self-sufficient member of his American community.

Now, sponsorship can take the form of an offer of support, employment or a combination of both. In any event, the sponsor must be ready to help the refugee with some of the less tangible aspects of resettlement, such as adjustment to a new culture, and acquainting the refugee with American laws and their requirements.

Sponsorship is not a formal, legal commitment; however, the sponsor undertakes a clear moral commitment to help the refugee to the best of his ability.

SPONSORSHIP REQUIREMENTS

A sponsor, in conjunction with an appropriate Voluntary Action Agency (VOLAG), is expected to:

- Receive the refugee and his family;
- Provide shelter and food until the refugee becomes self-sufficient (shelter need not be in the residence of the sponsor but must be adequate);
- Provide clothing and pocket money;
- Provide assistance in finding employment and in school enrollment for children; and
- Cover ordinary medical costs or medical insurance.

Once the refugee obtains employment, the sponsor assists the refugee to locate permanent housing, acquire minimal furniture, and arrange for utilities.

PROCESSING OF REFUGEES BY CATEGORY

The following procedures apply for the processing of various refugee categories:

- Refugees without sponsors. Voluntary Agencies (VOLAG) play the major role in resettling refugees by matching them with specific sponsors by obtaining the pledges of individuals, churches or community groups to

On sponsorship or locator matters, direct inquiry is encouraged to the Joint Refugee Information Clearing Office, Pentagon.

Army Element: (Room BF 762)
AV 227 5190 / 5191 5192 /5110
(202) 697 5190 / 5192 / 5110

Air Force Element: (Room BF 765)
AV 227 5143 / 5144 / 5145
(202) 697 5143 / 5144 / 5145

Marine Corps Element: (Room BF 763A)
AV 227 5140 / 5141 / 5142
(202) 697 5140 / 5141 / 5142

Navy Element: (Room 2D341)
AV 227 5406 or
225 3094 / 3096 / 3099
(202) 697 5406 or
695 3094 / 3096 / 3099

After duty hours, short recorded messages may be left for all services on: AV 227 5110 or (202) 697 5110.

resettle the refugees and by matching other offers of sponsorship that are not specific as to persons or family.

The Department of State already has received a number of offers of sponsorship, employment, housing and material assistances. These offers are being made available to the VOLAGs for verification and follow-up. Similar offers received at reception centers also should be referred to VOLAG representatives at the centers.

• **Refugees specifically named by a sponsor.** Offers to sponsor a named individual or family which can be matched with refugees of the same name at camps are referred to a VOLAG representative for verification because of the similarity of Vietnamese names. It's the responsibility of the VOLAG to determine first that the correct refugees have been located. In cases where a sponsor has named a specific family or the refugee has named a proposed sponsor, the VOLAG representative makes appropriate inquiries of the sponsor to confirm his willingness to help the refugee and to verify the plans for resettling the refugee. The responsibilities a sponsor assumes are explained to the prospective sponsor. As required, the VOLAG representative arranges for a local check to determine insofar as possible if the sponsor has the means needed for sponsorship.

Prospective sponsors should send a statement or telegram (see box, annex A) addressed to the individual refugee in care of the American Red Cross at the local camp. Or prospective sponsors can certify to VOLAG representatives in the sponsor's locality that he, the sponsor, understands the obligations of sponsorship and will make every effort to provide or assist the named refugees in obtaining housing, employment and other assistance leading to self-sufficiency in the American community.

Moreover, the USG is asking VOLAG to publicize the availability of their direct-name sponsorship service.

If the VOLAG representative determines the sponsor to be responsible, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) will authorize release of the refugee from camp. Those cases considered doubtful by a VOLAG representative can be rejected, and the refugee will be resettled by other voluntary agency efforts.

• **Refugees with independent means.** Certain refugees may have access to personal resources enabling them to be self-sustaining. These refugees may require only brief counselling to direct them to a resettlement location. A single adult or a family with at least one adult with facility in English, occupational skills and a general idea of a resettlement location can meet the self-sustaining test, if the family has average resources of $4,000 per person, exclusive of transportation costs.

At each camp, a board composed of

ANNEX A

I will make every reasonable effort to provide or assist in obtaining housing, employment and other assistance which will lead to self-sufficiency for the following individuals:

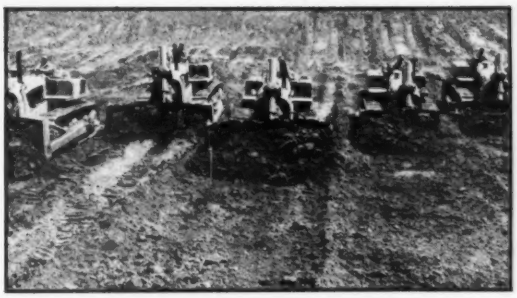
(name of selected sponsor at end of telegram text).

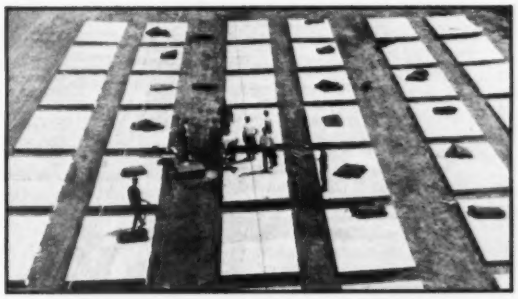
ESCAPE TO FREEDOM . . .

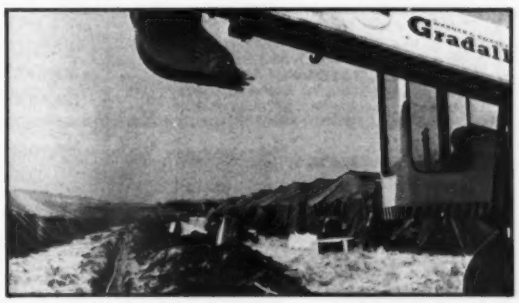
thousands of South Vietnamese fled their country to escape communist control. This U.S. Air Force C-141 flight (top, right) was one of dozens that lifted the refugees from Saigon to a temporary camp on Guam. Along the coast other South Vietnamese set out in boats to meet ships like the U.S.S. Durham (below and right) which evacuated 3,000 refugees.

MEANWHILE . . .

in the Continental United States military personnel quickly labored to prepare and maintain four Refugee Centers, Camp Pendleton, Calif. (below); Fort Chaffee, Ark.; Eglin AFB, Fla.; and Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.







The President has announced the appointment of 17 persons as members of the President's Advisory Committee on Refugees. They are:

Joseph L. Alioto, of San Francisco, California, Mayor of the City of San Francisco.

Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, of the District of Columbia, President, United States Catholic Conference.

Ashby Boyle, of Salt Lake City, Utah, student, University of Utah; National Youth Chairman, March of Dimes.

Dr. W. Sterling Cary, of Hinsdale, Illinois, President, National Council of Churches.

John Denver, of Aspen, Colorado, professional singer.

Ambassador John Eisenhower, of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, former Ambassador to Belgium.

Mrs. Gaetana Enders, of the District of Columbia, wife of Assistant Secretary of State Thomas O. Enders.

Governor Daniel Evans, of Olympia, Washington, Governor of the State of Washington.

Maurice Ferre, of Miami, Florida, Mayor of the City of Miami.

Minor George, of Parma, Ohio, businessman.

Edgar F. Kaiser, of Oakland, California, corporation executive of Kaiser Industries.

Philip M. Klutznick, of Chicago, Illinois, former member of United States delegation to the United Nations.

William J. Kuhfuss, of Mackinaw, Illinois, President, American Farm Bureau.

George Meany, of Bethesda, Maryland, President of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Clarke Reed, of Greenville, Mississippi, businessman and Republican National Committeeman.

Dr. Malcolm Todd, of Long Beach, California, physician and President of the American Medical Association.

Elder A. Theodore Tuttle, of Salt Lake City, Utah, The First Council of the Seventy, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The President also designated Ambassador Eisenhower as Chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on Refugees.

The committee will advise the President and the heads of appropriate Federal agencies concerning the expeditious and coordinated resettlement of refugees from Southeast Asia.

Nine volunteer agencies in charge of resettling the refugees are:

- U.S. Catholic Conference, Migration and Refugee Services, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.
- American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, 1709 Broadway, Room 1316, New York, 10019.
- Church World Service, Immigration and Refugee Program, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, 10027.
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, 315 Park Ave., South, New York, 10010.
- United HIAS Service Inc., 200 Park Ave., South, New York, 10003.
- Tolstoy Foundation Inc., 250 W. 57th St., New York, 10019.
- International Rescue Committee, 386 Park Ave., South, New York, 10016.
- American Council for Nationalities Service, 20 W. 40th St., New York, N.Y.
- Traveler's Aid-International Social Services, 345 E. 46th St., New York, N.Y.

officials from the Department of State, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare make the determination of self-sufficiency and authorize release from camp. Refugees determined to have adequate personal funds will not be maintained at camps at USG expense once security checks are completed. The board interviews the refugee and determines whether or not he can adequately meet the test of self-sufficiency outlined above. If he can, the refugee is certified for departure from camp without referral to a voluntary agency and without the requirement for sponsorship.

- **Relatives of American citizens and permanent aliens.** The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), with the assistance of the American Red Cross, verify the willingness and ability of the named relative to "sponsor" and resettle the refugees in the American community. Once this is confirmed, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) releases those refugees without an additional sponsorship requirement. If HEW decides the sponsor is unable to care for the refugees, the case is passed to an accredited Voluntary Action Agency (VOLAG) for processing. "Relatives" of U.S. citizens are defined here as spouse, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, unmarried siblings, and handicapped dependents.
- **Offers by former employers.** Sponsorship offered by a former employer is reviewed by the camp board (joint STATE-INS-HEW). If the board deems the former employer to be responsible, such as it would in cases involving major corporations, charitable organizations, and the United States Government, the refugee is released to the former employer without voluntary agency assistance.

If the employer cannot offer the full range of sponsor services, he is referred to an approved resettlement voluntary agency.

If an employer proposes to send the refugee outside the United States to work, the refugee should consult INS to ensure that appropriate travel and re-entry documents are issued.

TRAVEL

In general, the refugee may travel at his own expense, the expense of his sponsor, or the expense of the U.S. Government. But USG-paid travel should not be relied upon. At a minimum, the sponsor or the refugee should make partial payment for travel; however, government paid travel is preferred over jeopardizing sponsorship or depriving the refugee of essential funds required for resettlement.

In order to determine eligibility for government travel expenses, HEW verifies the assets of the refugee or sponsor before authorizing travel at government expense. Documentation of the lack of ability by either the refugee or the sponsor to finance travel is required (see box, annex B which may be used by the refugee or sponsor to authenticate the requirement for travel at government expense).

ANNEX B

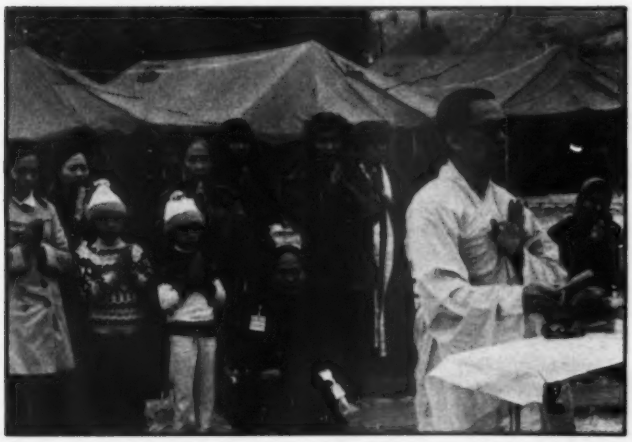
To: *Name of refugee,*
c/o Red Cross,
name of camp

As indicated by my signature below, I do hereby certify that I do not have access to funds necessary to purchase transportation to my destination. Further, I understand that my failure to so declare such funds as available may make me liable for repayment at a later date.

(signature of either refugee or sponsor).

PROCESS

PLAY



PRAYER

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It takes 41,000 cartons of non fat milk, 21,000 lbs. of bread, 10,200 lbs. of meat, 5,400 lbs. of rice and 60 cases of soy sauce to feed 14,000 Vietnamese refugees daily.

Military volunteers are working with English-speaking Vietnamese to smooth the transition into American life. Orientation sessions may be formal English lessons with electronic training aids (above) for classes of up to 50 students or informal one-to-one meetings (below, left) where a child might learn the difference between Vietnamese and American currency.

Getting Ready for AMERICA

COMMANDERS DIGEST

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